

COUNTRY LIFE

OFFICES:
20, TAVISTOCK STREET, STRAND, LONDON, W.C. 2.

VOL. XLIII. No. 1110.

Entered as Second-class Matter at the
New York, N.Y. Post Office.

[REGISTERED AT THE G.P.O.
AS A NEWSPAPER; AND FOR
CANADIAN MAGAZINE POST.]

SATURDAY, APRIL 13th, 1918.

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TELEGRAMS: "COUNTRY LIFE," LONDON. TELE. NOS.: (EDITORIAL) GERRARD 2748;
(ADVERTISEMENTS) REGENT 760.

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EDITORIAL NOTICE

The Editor will be glad to consider any MSS., photographs or sketches submitted to him, but they should be accompanied by stamped addressed envelopes for return if unsuitable. In case of loss or injury he cannot hold himself responsible for MSS., photographs or sketches, and publication in COUNTRY LIFE can only be taken as evidence of acceptance. The name and address of the owner should be placed on the back of all pictures and MSS.

* * * We appeal to our readers to send their copies of recent issues of COUNTRY LIFE to the TROOPS AT THE FRONT. This can be done by simply handing them over the counter of any Post Office. No label, wrapper or address is needed and no postage need be paid.

The War Office notifies that all papers posted to any neutral European country will be stopped, except those sent by publishers and newsagents who have obtained special permission from the War Office. Such permission has been granted to COUNTRY LIFE, and subscribers who send to friends in Denmark, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, neutral Countries in America, and the Dependencies of neutral European Countries in Africa should order copies to be despatched by the Publisher from 20, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, W.C. 2.

EVERY OUNCE OF ENERGY

PACIFISM has been silenced by recent events, and the country is in the mood to assent readily and resolutely to the stern programme which has been drawn up for the purpose of arraying the entire strength of the British Empire against Germany. No pretext has been left for refusing. The great offensive has disclosed an intention on the part of the enemy to risk all in a final effort to conquer France, fatally maim Great Britain and secure the domination of the world. Those who prefer that facts should be looked in the face recognise that fables have been disseminated about the enemy. No sign of weakness or failure of man-power is discernable. Men have been sacrificed as lavishly as in the autumn of 1914 when the Huns were intoxicated with success and fired with the hope of entering Paris. It must be admitted, too, that

the attack was planned with military skill and valorously undertaken. The bravery may have been of the kind shared by savage hordes or Roman gladiators, but it is there and has to be reckoned with. Dispassionate historians will probably describe it as obedience to the will of a desperate Kaiser come to recognise that for him the issue of the struggle is neck or nothing; but we have only to do with the fact that the men in field grey, like fatalistic Orientals, were prepared at the word of command to advance man on man knowing that for each that arrives at his destination many must bite the dust. Nor is it credible that the people themselves while their armies are still intact will rise against the tyrant. The Socialists, in flagrant defiance of their faith and profession, have hitherto supported militarism, and it would be suicidal to build on any chance of their revolt. When a murderer is grasping at your throat the most eloquent moral suasion is of no avail. And there can be no mistake about the matter. Britain is the foe, and it is for her throat the Kaiser's hand is groping. The alternative routes by which he hopes to obtain a grip are Paris on the one hand, and the Channel ports on the other. Let him win near success by either way and the attempt to land in this country would follow as the night the day. The most triumphant moment of his life would be that in which he felt in a position to deal with these islands as he has dealt with Belgium, Northern France, Russia and Rumania.

Subsequent events have shown that his early professions of a desire for peace can best be described by the term "eyewash." They have been loudest when the military fortunes of Germany were ebbing and have died away at the return of the flood. To parody an old saying: "The Kaiser was ill, the Kaiser a monk would be. The Kaiser was well, the devil a monk was he." Russia, under her precious Bolshevik leaders, was lured to her doom by a siren song of "No indemnities, no annexations"; we know how the tune was changed once the ruffian had his knees on the victim's chest. The Huns, as ever in their history, are out for booty.

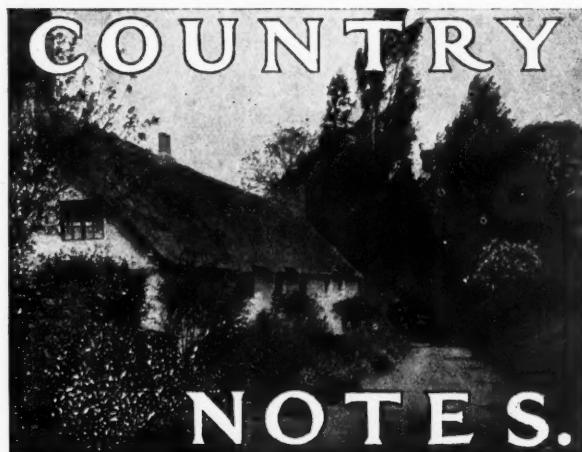
Those, again, who pinned their faith to a thin cosmopolitanism that leads nowhere and talked as though all the belligerents were equally to blame and spoke mysteriously of secret diplomacy and the iniquities it led to have seen their suspicions and surmises blown away like withered leaves by an autumn wind. Truth lasts longest, and every wrappage stripped from the pre-war situation leaves less ground for misconception. Germans themselves can no longer blind their eyes to it. Revealed to them is a Kaiser plotting for the war, preparation for which has engrossed the best years of his life. When he called it defensive he was only using a phrase to tickle the ears of the groundlings. He knew it to be a war of conquest and aggression. Grey, who figured in German newspapers of 1914 and 1915 as the arch-fiend of Europe, proves, what we always knew him to be, a punctiliously honourable statesman whose Socialistic reasonings caused him to hate war. Instead of planning to bring it about he used all the resources of his candid and ingenious mind to still the rising storm. No sovereign of Europe is more fully aware of this than the Emperor William, who sought to know Grey intimately. All this loses something of its significance now only because thrown into the shade by greater enormities.

Happily for the country, this statement of the case is well understood to be scrupulously accurate. No honest man in this country, very few in neutral countries, and only the fanatics among our enemies would think of impugning it. On this ground the Prime Minister takes his stand when he calls for every ounce of national energy to be put into the war, that of civilian as well as soldier. The Empire is called upon to rise in its might and defend not only hearth and home, but civilisation itself against this recrudescence of bold, unscrupulous, crafty barbarism.

Our Frontispiece

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Lady Congleton, wife of Lieutenant Lord Congleton, R.N., who was married on April 6th. Lady Congleton, before her marriage, was the Hon. Edith Howard, and is the younger daughter of Mr. R. J. B. Howard and Lady Strathcona and Mount Royal.

* * * It is particularly requested that no permission to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper.



HERE was the ring of steel in President Wilson's declaration at Baltimore. It was spoken in the hour of "utter disillusionment." The President reminded his hearers that he had never in the past judged the intentions of Germany harshly or unreasonably. He had sought to learn what our enemies wanted in this war and to deal as frankly with their objects as he wished them to deal with those of America. "I have," he said, "laid bare our own ideals, our own purpose, without reserve or doubtful phrase, and have asked them to show us plainly what it is that they seek." The answer comes from Russia, where they have to deal with a great people made helpless by their own act, and he finds that their fair professions are forgotten. They nowhere set up justice, but ever impose their power. President Wilson now recognises that the German purpose is "to make all Slavic peoples, all free and ambitious nations of the Balkan Peninsula, all the lands that Turkey has dominated and misruled, subject to their will and ambition." Further than that, their lust of power urges them to master Persia, India and the people of the Far East. The only thing left is to answer force with force. The contest in which our new ally joins is to ascertain whether Right, as America conceives it, or Dominion, as Germany conceives it, shall determine the destinies of mankind. To this appeal there can be but one response.

PEOPLE in this country are often heard wondering why it is that the German population does not recognise the way in which it is being led by the nose by the military caste. To us, brought up amid free institutions, it seems an anomaly of the most extraordinary kind that in spite of all the revelations and admissions made by his own people the average German is still able to cling to the pathetic fallacies which have been taught him by the Kaiser, namely, that Germany is fighting a defensive war, that England is dominated by the lust of aggression, and France and Italy equally so. But not long ago an American journalist brought out the truth of the matter in an original and ingenious way characteristic of our transatlantic friends. He pointed out that Germans in America had lived there for many years, some of them for two or three generations, amid democratic surroundings and absolutely free institutions, and therefore ought to have been able to form an independent judgment on the action of the Kaiser; but, notwithstanding that, the war was very far advanced before President Wilson could win their support. Only now are those Americanised Germans beginning to see clearly that the aim of the Kaiser is conquest, and that the proletariat is only an instrument in his hands. If it has taken them so long to learn this apparent truth in America, he asks, can we wonder that the truth has not yet penetrated the minds of those who remain in Germany. It was a pregnant piece of reasoning, and those who consider the matter in this light will not readily believe in any immediate revolution across the Rhine.

THE Red Cross sale now proceeding at Christie's challenges comparison with any of the historic sales held in the famous rooms in King Street. One item alone, the Red Cross diamond, would serve to lift any sale out of the ordinary. This diamond of 205 carats is the largest yellow diamond in the world and a striking feature of it is that the faceting shows a distinct Maltese cross. An interesting Stuart relic is the crystal box, presented by Princess Beatrice, containing a lock of the hair of Charles I's daughter Elizabeth. Then there is the magnificent collection of furniture presented

by Sir George Donaldson; the swords of honour, presented to Admiral Collingwood, which are already familiar to our readers, and a host of articles that are, in the true sense of a much ill used word, unique. To many the most attractive section is that containing letters and autographs. Many authors of the day have presented the MSS. of their works. Mr. Lloyd George is represented by the notes of his famous "Go on or go under" speech. Dickens' MSS. occupy four pages of the catalogue; and there is the delightful letter from Stevenson to Mrs. Sitwell in which, writing of Dickens' "Christmas Books," he says, "I have cried my eyes out, and had a terrible fight not to sob. But O, dear God, they are good—and I feel so good after them and would do anything, yes, and shall do anything, to make it a little better for people. . . . Oh what a jolly thing it is for a man to have written books like these books and just filled people's hearts with pity." The catalogue has also its touch of humour, for does not Mr. Nevinson, who presents one of the "blank canvases," stoutly declare that he will paint anything "except a pet Pekinese or a fashionable portrait"?

IT was a practical idea of the Food Production Department to issue a list of counties which have consumed during the past year more potatoes than they have grown. This is calculated to bring home to the population the absolute need of striving to attain the million acre standard set up by Mr. Lloyd George. Some of the counties we notice have advertised the figures in their local papers, so that there can be no excuse for neglecting to get as many potatoes into the ground as possible. To take one example, the County of Northumberland last year grew 35,000 tons of potatoes and consumed not less than 68,700 tons, leaving a deficit of 33,700 tons. This ought not to be repeated. Farmers in the county should set to work to grow at least as many potatoes as the locality needs. Probably the Executive Committees of the various counties will have to go closer into the matter than this. They must analyse and divide the responsibility. There are counties which grow extra quantities of other foodstuffs and therefore may be permitted to import a certain quantity of potatoes from special potato-growing districts. The matter cannot be decided by rule of thumb, but nothing but good would come of it if the quota to be contributed by each parish were duly set forth, and the local Committees were to go even further than this and find what is the net responsibility of each individual grower. In that way it might be possible to obtain a really important increase of the area devoted to this crop. The year is not yet advanced so far but that the leeway can be made good.

BIRDS.

April! The birds begin to sing,
I hear the swallows twittering
In that old nest they left last year
(As our Colonial children come,
And always feel their home is here,
Though the world's end may be their home.)

The greenfinch, like a leaf alive,
Flits here and there; his time to wive!
The yellowhammer's heart of gold
Shows golden in a loving breast
That keeps the cuckoo's orphan bold
And feeds it in a tender nest.

But oh! of all the birds that fly
Between the furrow and the sky
Be mine the nightingale, for choice:
No larger than a russet leaf
That lends the silent moon a voice
Of wonder, passion, hope and grief!

MARY DUCLAUX.

IT must be admitted that the allotment holder has done his part nobly. We believe that this is largely due to the fact that he can reduce his little problem to simple terms. On an average an individual consumes 2cwt. of potatoes per annum; thus a householder knows that, supposing his family to number five, he will be safe if he can produce 10cwt. of potatoes. This is well within his grasp on an allotment of the average size, and when he has made his potatoes secure, it is easy to add other crops which fall little behind the potato in value. He has rightly been encouraged to grow as many leguminous plants as possible. Peas and beans are worth more than the usual value in times when meat is scarce, as a very small ration of beef or mutton is

sufficient when accompanied by a liberal dish of peas or beans. The war has brought into favour those French and other beans which used to be known compendiously as kidney beans in this country. The French peasant woman is very clever at such cookery, and can make them into a dish which is delicious as well as satisfying while they are in the green state, and the custom is growing for the pods to be dried and the beans preserved for use as haricots in winter time. It has been pointed out, too, that if meat is scarce there is more need for vegetables which add a relish to food, such as radishes and salad plants, chives, shallots and so on. On the whole, roots probably yield better value than green vegetables of the cabbage sort. Onions, leeks, beetroot and celery will go far to help the cottager through the winter, whereas cabbages in themselves are not satisfying.

NO class in the community is more ready or eager to take its share in the war than the clergy. The younger men especially have felt their disqualifications acutely and will be the first to welcome the recognition of their manhood. Large numbers of them have served at school or university in officers training corps, and they are as keen as any men of their age to serve. The exemption from Military Service hitherto secured to the clergy and ministers of religion was not of their own seeking, and many of them felt very strongly that their work in the future would be gravely handicapped by their being cut off from the unparalleled experiences that men of their own generation were passing through. A considerable number enlisted with and without permission of their ecclesiastical superiors, while very many more took up various forms of national service, such as munition making which they combined with their parish work. It can be safely said of the Church of England that practically every unbenedicent clergyman of military age and fitness offered himself to the Army Chaplains' Department or to the Admiralty. The public is familiar with the devoted service that the padres of all denominations have rendered on the battlefield. Many have laid down their lives, many more have been incapacitated, and the wastage by death and disease is daily being made good. No one, least of all the fighting men, would wish the supply of chaplains to be diminished by engaging the clergy in the sort of non-combatant work that could be as well performed by women or partially disabled men.

IN France the conscribing of the clergy was one of the consequences of the Separation Laws; but what was done as an act of spite against the clergy has turned out to be a source of strength to the Church. When the Rationalist administration, heaping ignominy on the Church compelled her priests to bear arms they little thought that the clergy would, by the wholehearted identification of themselves with the Army, bring such honour to the Church as she had not enjoyed in France for many a long year. The French soldier has come to know his *curé* comrade as a man and a brother, to the great gain of them both. He sees the soldier-priests of France vying with each other in upholding the honour of their country and so serving the Church they love. There are no finer stories of the war than those that tell of the heroism of these soldier-priests: of their splendid efficiency and courage as soldiers and of their devotion to their comrades when the moment calls for the exercise of their priestly functions. So it comes about that such revival of religion as there may be in France is chiefly due to this sharing of a common experience by priest and people. Our own clergy will be quick to show they are no whit behind their French brethren in using the chances that now lie to their hands.

ONE cannot refrain from giving one or two extracts from the letter which came with the charming poem by Mme. Duclaux which is printed in these "Country Notes." Its phrases give a vivid impression of life in Paris just now. "On Monday," our correspondent tells us, "a bomb, louder than the others, shook our window frames: the bomb had fallen quite close. My sister ran out to see the hole . . . and . . . saw a little blood on the sand and a crutch in a tree; two soldiers, one wounded, had been blown to bits. A very dear young friend, about twenty-four, a widow of the war, a beautiful, generous, devoted creature, reminding us always of Dorothea in 'Middlemarch,' was crushed as she was listening to the music at one of the Good Friday services. I am just going to her funeral." Mr. Prothero on a celebrated occasion likened England to a beleaguered city, but here we are not quite in that position. Mme. Duclaux concludes: "Why in such circumstances I should write a song about birds I cannot tell, except that

a pair are building in the eaves above my balcony, not in the least daunted apparently by the cannon, though they fly all ways when a bomb falls. I wrote it this morning and put it in my letter as the lads in the trenches put a violet or a primrose." One hopes that the French airmen will not be long in locating the big gun which is causing the uneasiness in Paris, and that other causes for anxiety will soon be removed. General Foch is confident that this will be so, and he is a man who has earned the trust of his compatriots.

OUR readers are well aware of the prickly obstacles which stand in the way of tithe reform. According to an intimation made in the House of Lords a few days ago it appears, however, that something is going to be done. During the war tithe rent charge has very greatly increased in value. It is now £109 per cent. instead of the £70 odd that it had attained before the war. Tithe rent charge, as everybody knows, is based on the septennial average of the price of corn, a method of assessment dating from 1837, the year after the Act was passed, causing a money payment to be substituted for the very unsatisfactory payment in kind which had preceded it. During the eighty years that have gone by since then very great fluctuations have taken place. The tithe has risen as high as £112, and during the depression of the eighties of last century it fell as low as £66. An Act was passed in 1891 which made the tithe payable by the landowner and not by the farmer. Now in the situation which has arisen it is the farmer who gains by the higher price of cereals, while the landowner is subjected to paying a higher tithe rent charge, which is a form of increased taxation, while he obtains no benefit from the increased price of corn. It is unquestionable that this is a very gross injustice.

CRUX GLORIÆ.

You had finished your work—it was bravely done,
Your name had gone forward for mention,
They said that a Military Cross you had won—
Such was the official intention.

You had finished your work, you had earned your rest,
Through the darkness a shell came screaming,
And stamped a crimson cross on your breast—
(And we at home lay dreaming !)

Your work was finished, and nobly done,
And a Cross was your decoration,
For you shared in the work of God's own Son,
Who died for a world's salvation.

MARGARET GIRDLESTONE.

IN other respects the tithe rent charge has become anomalous. When the land was surveyed for its assessment in 1837 the plan adopted was to lay a tithe on each individual field, and the value of the field was mainly considered in view of its corn-producing capacity. Thus the heavy clays of Essex, which at that time grew splendid crops of wheat, were much more heavily tithed than the excellent pastures of Cumberland and other counties. The difference in many cases was that between shillings and coppers; that is to say, the tithe often amounted to as much as 10s. on wheat-growing land, while the best pasture had not to pay as many coppers. Again, further confusion has arisen from the sale and purchase of tithes; they now belong to a variety of owners, and as in many cases they have been acquired openly and at a just price in the market, it would not be compatible with honesty and fairness to get rid of them in any high-handed manner. At the same time, it has long been clear that a sound financial scheme should be produced for the removal of this burden from land. It was suggested by Mr. Prothero some time ago that the better way would be to make the redemption in kind; that is, instead of paying tithe in the usual way, the owner might give up a certain portion of his land so that the other might be tithe-free for ever. In the property market there has always been a liking on the part of purchasers for land on which the tithe has been redeemed.

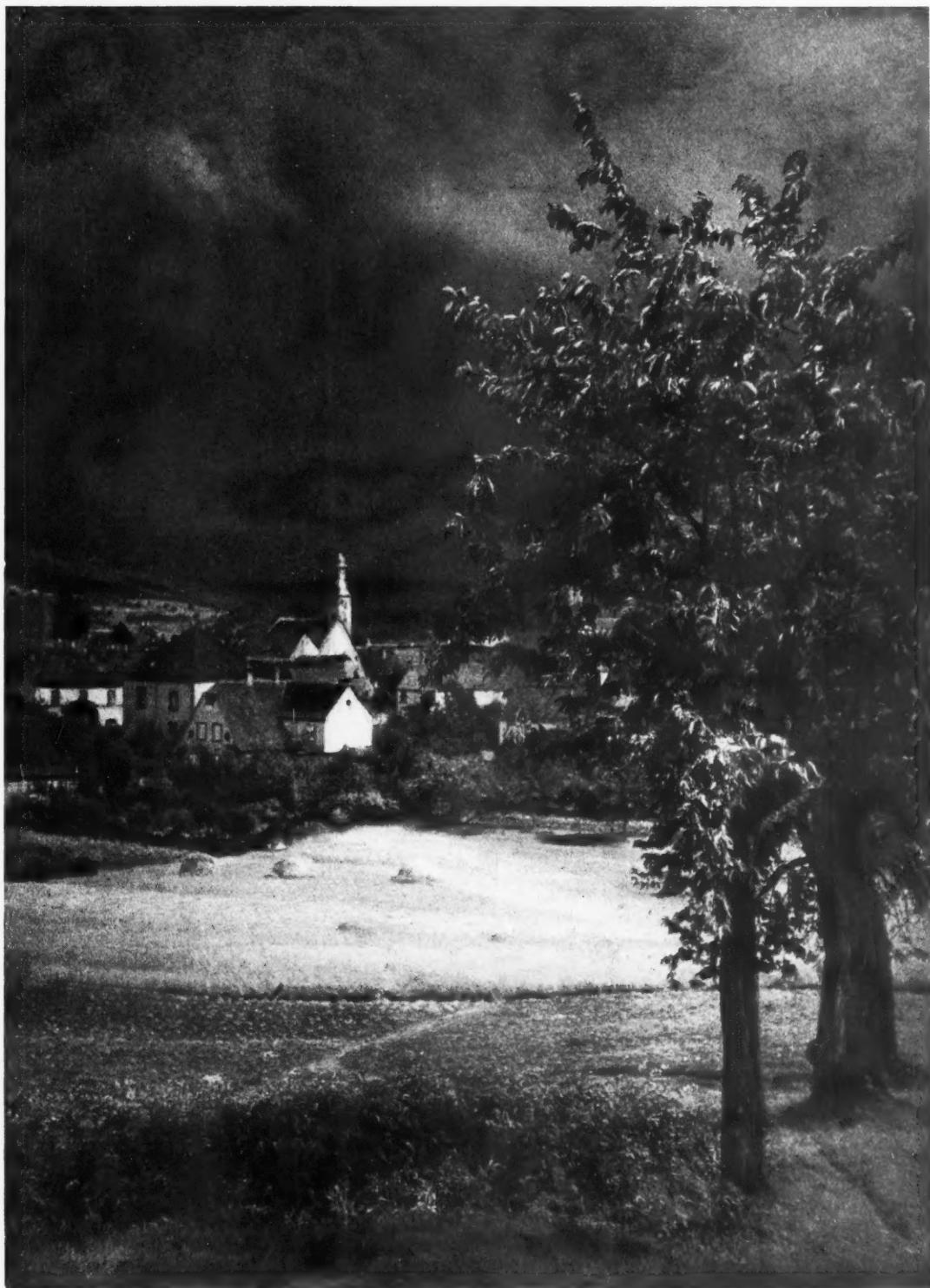
OUR readers will expect to find in this issue the results of the COUNTRY LIFE Shooting Competitions. Owing, however, to the firing date having been extended to March 22nd we are obliged to hold over the announcement of the names of the winning schools. We hope it may be possible to complete the examination of the targets in time to publish the results next week.

PEACE AND ALSACE-LORRAINE

COUNT CZERNIN, when he returned from the so-called "peace negotiations" with Rumania, made an assertion which renders it of vital importance for the Allies to understand the principles underlying the claim of France to the return of her lost provinces.

Count Czernin made the assertion that M. Clemenceau had asked to enter into peace negotiations with him, but that the French determination to have Alsace-Lorraine returned proved an insuperable barrier. The French Prime Minister immediately replied to this with the direct statement that Count Czernin had lied, and the public will be more inclined to attach credence to him than to the wily Austrian, who, though full of soft words to the world at large, is in reality bound hand and foot to the War Party in Berlin. The question of Alsace-Lorraine should be considered in the light of the principles laid down by President Wilson,

which have secured at least the verbal assent of the Central Powers and the hearty endorsement of the Allies. President Wilson's contention, which is also that of the American people, is that fighting must go on until a permanent peace is assured. A condition of that peace is what has come to be called in the jargon of the day "the self-determination of nations," but this is only a new phrase for the idea underlying all government in this country, namely, that every nation should be ruled only with the consent of the governed. Now the people of Alsace-Lorraine were never consulted when they were taken over by Prussia. It was not a treaty of peace that decided their fate, but the will of a conqueror. Bismarck, who avoided humbug in politics, based his action solely on the contention that the annexation of this district was necessary to the security of Germany. Were that principle generally applied it would obviously allow any combatant to claim whatever territory he coveted. Germany seems



Bertram C. Wickison.

THE THUNDERSTORM: WORTH, ALSACE.

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ON AN ALSATIAN FARM.



to consider that her security depends upon the greater part of Europe becoming fiduciary to the Kaiser. The objection to relinquishing Belgium, which was invaded in contempt of the rights possessed by a smaller nation, is that it is needed as a buffer state to prevent invasion by Great Britain. Obviously this is sheer pretence, as no British statesman

Hunnish. Alsace-Lorraine, as a matter of fact, was torn ruthlessly from the loins of France. It would serve little purpose to recall the bitterness of that event were it not for the after effects. Germany herself won the possession very dearly, because it left her with an uneasy conscience. During the half century that has elapsed since it took place Germany



Bertram C. Wickison.

AN ALSATIAN VILLAGE.

Copyright.

has ever for one moment expressed a wish that this country, except under provocation of attack, should invade or despoil Germany. The grandiose conception of a German line running from Antwerp to Baghdad was conceived in similar disregard to the rights of any population that did not happen to be

has always had the fear of France attempting to recover this territory; hence the drilling and warlike preparation that have gone ceaselessly on. At first, no doubt, the aim was to some extent defensive, but it became aggressive as time went on, and the Kaiser dreamt of building up a fleet

that would be as powerful as his army. It is true that from 1870 until 1914 spasmodic efforts were made to win the allegiance of the inhabitants, but Germany has little idea of ruling, except by iron repression. Privileges were taken away from the people, their language was interfered with, lines of fortifications were built and other measures adopted which could only be characterised as the precautions taken by a victor against those whom he had conquered. That a similar procedure would be adopted if the Germans were ultimately victorious in the war is very evident from what has taken place in Russia. No one has put it more clearly than General Smuts, who said in his speech to the Cloth-workers' Company the other day, "We know now after the peace with Russia, and, alas! with Roumania, that Germany's policy in this war is one of annexations and indemnities, and that like the treaties of her Government the resolutions of her Parliament are mere scraps of paper." Just as her soldiers put out the eyes and otherwise maimed the boys in Belgium in her ruthless invasion of that unhappy country, so she is trying to maim a great empire by carving out of it little states and principalities which will live under German domination and ever be a threat to Russia.

During the time that has elapsed since the war of 1870 French feeling has undergone many fluctuations. Anyone desirous of studying the subject fully will do well to read a little book called "The Question of Alsace-Lorraine," by Jules Duhem, where it is treated at once exhaustively and frankly. In the little summary prefixed to the book the author says that the history of the question of Alsace-Lorraine from 1871 to 1914 is full of instruction. He admits that the national spirit of France is subject to strong fluctuations, but menace only makes it grow stronger as it did in the years 1875, 1887, 1905, 1908, 1911 and 1913. Immediately

after the war indignation surged high in France; so high that Europe more than once dreaded that the Germans would be induced to attempt a fresh invasion of France. On March 1st, 1871, the National Assembly declared the annexation to be null and void. In subsequent years Colonial policy assumed larger proportions in France and the idea of revenge to some extent died down; but this was only of temporary duration. The old feeling was revived by General Boulanger, but that again did not last long. Germany had many opportunities of entering into an enduring friendship with France but completely neglected them, and in the earlier years of the present century the mutual distrust between the two nations indicated a renewal of the struggle. "The conviction was forced upon us that Germany would refuse every concession, however reasonable, and would retain her aggressive attitude."

Fortunately the pretences of Germany have been gradually stripped off during the last few weeks, and it must have become evident to the Germans themselves that the war was planned by the Emperor in a spirit of aggression and aggrandisement. The memorandum of Prince Lichnowsky, the revelation of Herr Krupp and the confession of von Jagow leave, as General Smuts said, "no atom of doubt any more" that Germany deliberately planned and willed this war and forced it upon Europe as a war of German aggression. What we have to remember now is that the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine in 1870 left behind it germs of discord which have clouded the prospects of peace ever since; and that if the Germans are allowed to do again what they did then, not the slightest prospect can be entertained of the establishment of a lasting world peace such as our soldiers are fighting for and such as is passionately sought by President Wilson and those who think with him.

STANDARDISATION OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR

MANY of the most interesting ideas connected with agriculture have come from beginners and novices, men who have been thrust into the business rather than attracted to it naturally. Among such must be numbered Mr. T. B. Ponsonby, who gave a most ingenious and interesting lecture to the Farmers' Club on Monday, April 8th, on "The Standardisation of Agricultural Labour." Mr. Ponsonby told his hearers that he farmed 1,000 acres without previous training and without education in the science of farming. He studied it entirely as a business. The result of his experiences was laid before the farmers of Great Britain in a paper as entertaining as it was wise. Now, first let us understand what is meant by "standardising labour." Mr. Ponsonby warned his hearers that he did not use the term as it is applied to the spare parts of a motor plough. Instead he took the definition of Mr. Holder Evans, Naval Constructor to the United States: "Standardisation represents the determination by the best talent available of the best method for producing work and the adherence to this method until a better is determined." We do not know that this definition will go straight to the heart of our readers or to their brain, which is more to the point, but consideration of what Mr. Ponsonby said will make it clear. He explained in the beginning that owing to the prevalence of exceptionally wet seasons in Ireland and other causes, he and many who were in the same boat had taken to stock raising as a form of agriculture which depends more upon the individual himself than his labourers, but that the war had obliged him to change his system. The Food Production Department say that flocks and herds are not wanted as much as corn and potatoes, and the Irish farmer, like the English, had to take to arable. We gather that the amusing and good-natured but slightly lazy Irish labourer did not take to the hard labours this involves with exactly the same pleasure that a fish takes to water; he had to be taught new habits. Now, the main thing was to interest him. Mr. Ponsonby illustrated the vacancy of the labourer's mind by a very happy comparison. A man may go round a golf course and enjoy it thoroughly, while in the field beside him a labourer is singling turnips and is sick and weary of the job. The golfer does not feel the solitude so much because all the while he has an invisible playmate whom it is customary to call Colonel Bogey, this Colonel being a man of great and almost mathematical regularity, doing the holes in so many

shots—three, four or five as the case may be—the golfer's aim, playing by himself, being to beat the score of his invisible companion, which he has with him in a notebook. The game may not be quite so lively as it would be with a rival of flesh and blood, but it is interesting because the comparison with the bogey is in reality a comparison with all who play on that particular golf course. But the unfortunate singler of turnips has no turnip-singling bogey as companion. He toils on, not knowing whether he is doing more or less than an average, and his work is made unnecessarily dull. Now, that is only one example out of many. Mr. Ponsonby argues that if one can get a proper basis of comparison it will add greatly to the interest, and therefore to the efficiency of the worker; that, in fact, is what he means by "standardising labour," and in order to go through his subject systematically he divides the work on a farm into four classes—horse-drawn implements, carting, manual labour and stock management. Now, what determines the work done by an implement are the two factors of time and speed. If one knows how long a plough is at work and the rate at which it travels, then it is easy to calculate what a day's work should be. As the lecturer put it, if it is a fair day's work for horses to draw a plough 10 miles through heavy land, then the number of acres which the plough will do in a day will be found by dividing the width of the furrow in inches by 10. If one is ploughing a roin furrow, 10 divided by $10=1$; 1 acre is a fair day's work, and will be performed if the plough is drawn for 10 miles. He applies this ingenious method of calculation to the heavy cultivator. Sixty inches divided by $10=6$; 6 acres will be performed in a day under the same conditions. He goes on to give equally simple means of calculating what a fair day's work would be in more favourable conditions, and applies his system of reasoning to the harrow and other implements. As an example of the way in which his method works, he relates the story of a friend who had invested in a potato digger, but had not the remotest idea as to how long it would take to dig 8 acres of potatoes. "I asked him," says Mr. Ponsonby, "how wide his potato drills were, and he told me 28ins. I knew that the potato digger is a fairly heavy machine of rather intermittent working. Relying upon the rules mentioned above, I applied the divisor 10 and told him that 2.88 acres would be a fair day's work, and this eventually turned out to be quite correct." Very evidently anyone who masters this principle can tell what a given

machine ought to do in its working hours—knowledge that would relieve many puzzled minds. Carting is treated on the same principle.

Now we come to manual labour, such as turnip singling, to which allusion has already been made. Unfortunately, one cannot very well get a standard for it, because it depends upon the cleanliness of the land. A range of cost from 2½d. to 6d. per 100yds. of drill is not uncommon. Often double expense is incurred through the omission of horsehoeing.

In regard to stock management, it is evident that if a shepherd can shift hurdles and get roots for 200 sheep, or look after 400 sheep where roots are not cut, it is easy to apply a standard to any considerable bit of shepherding. In regard to management of cattle, the farmer has already learned

usually partly as piece work and partly at a fixed wage. As far as possible it is good to have day work or piece work optional, but the main thing is that the labourer should know that his earnings in the first place will be paid promptly, and in the second place that they will correspond, as far as possible, with the degree of efficiency which he is able to show.

CORRESPONDENCE

ROOTS FOR PIGS.

SIR,—In *COUNTRY LIFE* of April 6th I notice an article *re* feeding pigs on sugar beets. I know from experience that roots can be much more largely used for pig feeding than is the common practice, and that the most economical way is to feed the roots in their natural state uncooked. It is quite possible that sty-reared pigs might not benefit by the treatment which agrees so well with my hardy pedigree Middle Whites, which have for generations past been

brought under healthy open air conditions, but the enclosed photographs of two of my gilts with their first litters of ten and eleven pigs respectively will show that 7lb. to 10lb. per day of swedes and mangels for several weeks prior to farrowing has had nothing but good effect. Root feeding is continued at all stages until the pastures have grown sufficiently to make roots unnecessary. Young gilts of six months are also receiving the same daily quantity of 7lb. to 10lb. of roots per head, and I doubt if anyone can show healthier or better developed pigs at their respective ages than are in my "Aber" herd of Middle Whites. The judicious use of home-produced foods such as roots, clover, vetches, etc., fed uncooked and in their natural state, will much reduce both the labour and expense incidental to pig keeping; but, of course, a type of pig of hardy constitution and a disposition to live a natural life should be kept.—E. H. ARNOTT.

A REGIMENTAL PIGGERY.

SIR,—I thought possibly the attached statement concerning a piggy run by a battalion in this corps might interest the readers of *COUNTRY LIFE*. I do not think it is generally known what the Army at home is doing in the way of providing food as well as providing men for overseas. Our battalion alone has 14 acres of ground under cultivation, chiefly potatoes. Altogether in the camp (which is in a large park, illustrations of which have often adorned the pages of *COUNTRY LIFE*) there are approximately 100 acres already provided for. This ground is looked after by the men solely for the benefit of the battalions, and a certain portion is allotted to individuals should they care to take up the ground on their own account. Seed is supplied free, and they are permitted to take home the produce. If these men leave the camp, the ground can be passed to other men nominated by themselves. It is also proposed to keep poultry. Of course, the monthly account has not provided for such things as rent of ground or wages for a man to look after the pigs, but I think it shows a sufficient margin to provide for these items. This should be considerably increased for April. Fortunately, we have an officer who is a practical farmer and who can supervise these things besides his other work.

PIGGERY MONTHLY BALANCE SHEET, FEBRUARY 26TH, 1918, TO MARCH 26TH, 1918.

EXPENSES.	£	s.	d.
Cost of material for building and furnishing piggery (mainly furniture)	12	1	3
Cost of two sows in pig	32	0	0
Cost of ten store pigs (averaging 67½lb. each, at 18s. per 20lb.)	30	5	0
Travelling and out of pocket expenses	6	11	5
Cost of foodstuffs	3	0	0
Depreciation	1	9	4
By increased valuation, first month	33	10	0
			£118 17 0

INCOME.

Estimated valuation of stock at lowest valuation:

One sow, due April 17th	28	0	0
One sow and eight suckers	32	10	0
Ten store pigs at 88lb. each, at 21s. per score pounds	46	4	0
Value of piggery and furniture	10	12	0
Value of foodstuffs in stock	1	11	0

—H. CALKIN.

£118 17 0



A MIDDLE WHITE GILT WITH HER FIRST LITTER.



OPEN AIR AND UNCOOKED ROOTS.

standardisation to a great extent. For example, he is now being encouraged in every way to keep a milk record of his herd, and he cannot do that long without coming to the conclusion that a cow, to be worth its place in his herd, should yield so many gallons a year. He may begin with 500 gallons, but if he is enterprising and resolute he will soon have raised the standard to 650 gallons, and will not be happy until he has got above that, weeding out every animal that does not come up to the mark. In feeding cattle, too, rations to a very large extent have been standardised, although it needs no saying that animals differ as much as human beings in their eating capacity and in the effect produced by the food they consume. One effect of standardisation is that it enables the employer to regulate wages. Good farming is done



COUNTRY
HOMES &
GARDENS
OLD & NEW

REIGATE PRIORY.—II.
SURREY,
THE SEAT OF
MR. H. C. S. A. SOMERSET.

IN one of the principal apartments, the present entrance hall, is a magnificent chimneypiece, quite one of the best of its period in England. It is of Henry VIII's reign, and is traditionally said to have come from Nonsuch House, Ewell, built by that monarch out of the spoils of religious houses. But John Evelyn says in his "Diary" (August 11th, 1655) that it was brought from Blechingley, Surrey, which, like Reigate Priory, belonged at a later date to Lady Peterborough, and this version may be taken as the more probable. Otherwise the style of the Early Renaissance carving of this beautiful chimneypiece would accord quite well with the date of Lord William Howard's ownership and remodelling of the Priory buildings. Another tradition says it was designed by Holbein for Queen Katherine Howard, but, so far as the oak mantelpiece is concerned, Anne of Cleves is more probable, as Henry VIII dowered the "Flemish Mare" with Blechingley Manor. It bears the Royal arms of France and England quarterly on an oval shield, carved in high relief in oak, another shield of the typical Tudor shape appearing immediately below in the richly carved pedimental frieze of the stone chimney arch. This arch, which was obviously not made for the great oak structure above it, is of four-centred shape, having sunk and carved spandrels in which are other shields. Above the oval shield in the main frieze of the oak-work a pair of plump and ungainly cherubs in *alto reliefo* are represented as flying (or sprawling) with a Royal crown

in their hands. Heraldically they act as "supporters." Elaborate arabesques fill up the rest of this central portion, a great dentil and modillion cornice crowning the whole. Right and left are pairs of Corinthian columns in oak with very elaborate plinths and blocking courses, and each pair encloses canopied niches above State seats of the most curious design very richly carved.

Evelyn's exact words are worth quoting: "I went to Rygate to visit Mrs. Cary at my Lady Peterboro's, in an ancient Monastery, well in repair, but the parke much defac'd; the house is nobly furnish'd. The chimney-piece in the greate chamber, carv'd in wood was of Hen. 8. and was taken from an house of his in Blechinglee. At Rygate was now ye Archbishop of Armagh, the learned James Usher, whom I went to visite." The original design by Holbein of the chimneypiece is in the British Museum. Among other curious details of this fireplace are the carvings in the stone spandrels and pedimental frieze. In the centre of the frieze is a shield of Lord William Howard between two nude cherubs; a man in the costume of Henry VIII's reign, c. 1540; a nude woman; an armless man and a kneeling figure with puffed and slashed sleeves and doublet, blowing an S-shaped trumpet. These are set in a scroll of foliage. The spandrel shields before mentioned bear on a field, *or*, a lion rampant, *gules*, for Howard.

A survey of Reigate Manor, dated 1622, speaks of the Priory estate south of the town as well stored with timber





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FIREPLACE IN THE HOLBEIN HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

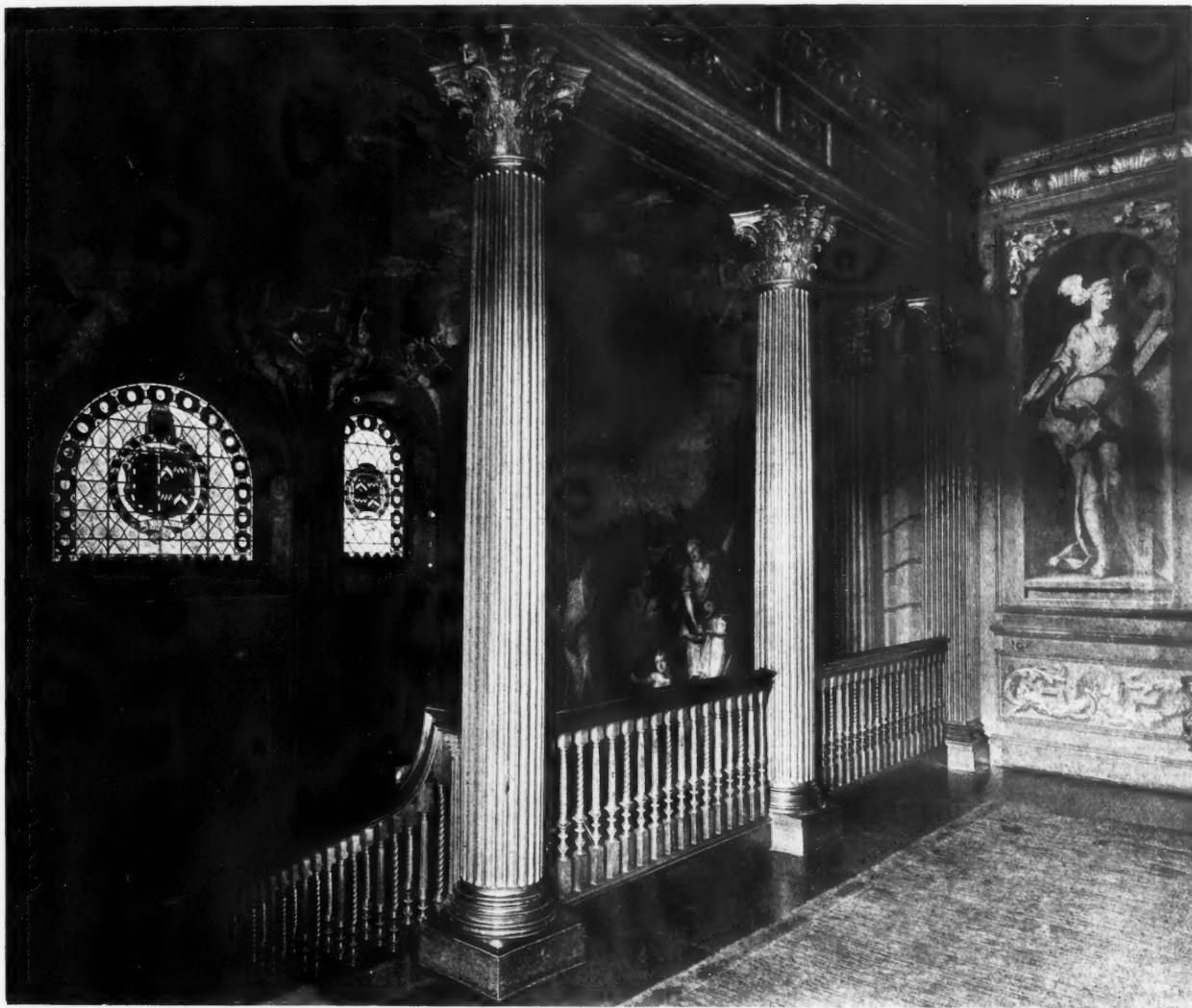
[April 13th, 1918.]



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THE GRAND STAIRCASE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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PAINTINGS ON THE GRAND STAIRCASE.

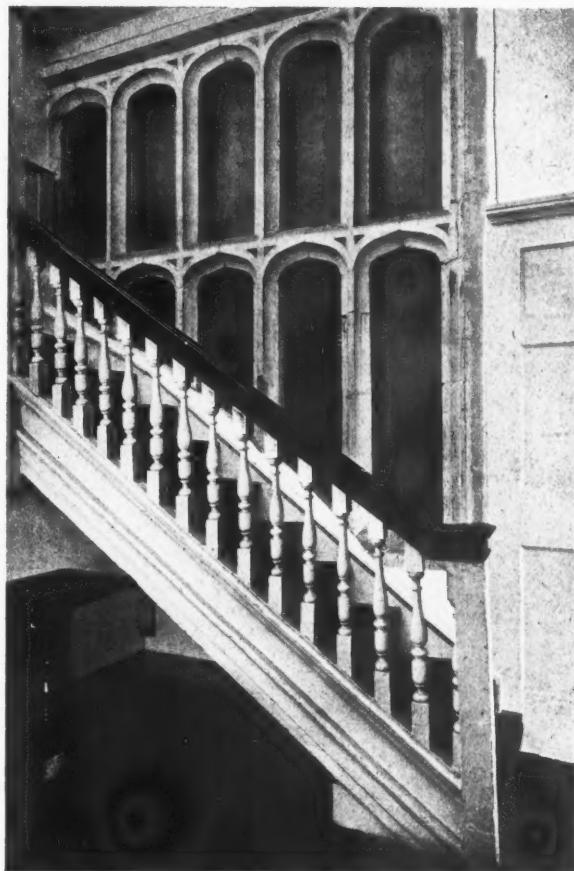
"COUNTRY LIFE."

and deer, and having "a faire pond stored with fish, and a small breed of hearons." The pond still remains. The estate covered 201 acres, and included a portion of the waste land attached to it. The Earl of Wottingham, who lived at the Priory, held it on lease from the Earl of Dorset. It passed as part of the jointure of Elizabeth Howard, a lady of extraordinary beauty who married Lord John Mordaunt, created Earl of Peterborough in 1627. His son, in 1659, was made Lord Reigate, and his daughter sold the place in Charles II's reign to Sir John Parsons, Lord Mayor of London in 1703. His son again sold it to Mr. Richard Ireland in 1766. In 1801 the house was bought by George Mowbray, who sold it to the family of the present owners. It was during Sir J. Parsons' time that the character of the buildings began to be changed into their present style and the grand staircase was put into the hall. Mr. Ireland completed the work of classicising the old house in 1779.

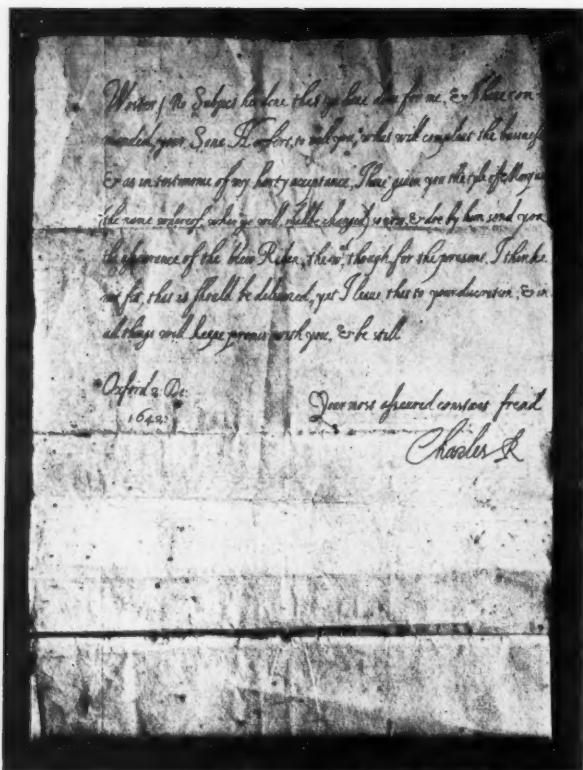
A tradition remains that the Priory was connected by an underground passage with the Castle, and in the cellars beneath the house the entrance to this passage (if such it were) remains, together with the mediæval door. The old bell is still preserved and in use in the Priory.

There are many well proportioned rooms besides the Holbein Hall, mostly reflecting Georgian and more modern taste and adorned with very beautiful tapestries, furniture and pictures brought together since 1808—when Lord Somers came into possession—very largely by Lady Henry Somerset, so well known not only for her refined artistic tastes, but also for her widespread zeal in all philanthropic causes. That lady, although she no longer resides at the Priory, which she has passed on to her son, Captain Somerset, still occupies occasionally a smaller house in Reigate, but the great house and its beautiful gardens continue to reflect her cultivated tastes.

This is notably the case with the collection of valuable pictures, ancient and modern, which are to be seen in the principal rooms. To specify them all would be difficult in the limited space that can be here afforded. Only the more prominent can be mentioned. Thus, we have in the



Copyright. A WINDOW OF THE OLD PRIORY. "C.L."



CHARLES I'S LETTER TO THE MARQUESS OF WORCESTER. MISS ELLEN TERRY AND HER DAUGHTER, BY WATTS.



Copyright.

THE LIBRARY FIREPLACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

drawing-room a very striking portrait of Lady Henry herself by Watts, painted in 1872, balancing another of Lord Tennyson by the same painter, "the finest, I think, he ever did of the Poet—dates somewhere about 1851"—Lady Henry writes. Another is of Miss Ellen Terry and her daughter.

There are also in the drawing-room two fine paintings by Boccaccino (1496-1525); a small Annunciation, fifteenth century; two pictures of the Blessed Virgin; a Deposition from the Cross; a picture of the school of Padua; the Virgin giving her girdle to St. Thomas; and two fine Italian landscapes. The large painting of the Madonna and Child over the chimneypiece is a very beautiful example of Albertinelli.

The library, an interesting room in itself, contains a very valuable collection of books, and some very precious autograph letters from the great Lord Burleigh, from Charles I to the Marquess of Worcester sealed with the famous ruby, and from Marie Antoinette to the Princesse de Lamballe. King Charles's letter reads :

Woster, No Subject has done that ye have done for me, & I have commanded your Son, Herbert, to tell you what will compleat the businesse, & as in testimonie of

my harty acceptance, I have given you the tytle of Marquis (the name whereof when ye will shall be changed) so now & doe by him send by him the assewrance of the blew Ribon, the web, though for the present I think not fitt, that it should be delivered, yet I leave that to your discretion, & in all things will keepe promis with you & be still.

Your most assured
Oxford 2De : Constant frenf
1642 CHARLES R.

The Holbein Hall conducts to the grand staircase of oak, with a ceiling painted by Verrio. On the walls are painted "Man between Wisdom and Folly"—cards and books and a temple form the suggestive accompaniments—and "The Rape of the Sabines," a somewhat startling change from the rather artificial moral of the other. In the inner vestibule on the first floor the subject painted is "The Arts."

The Green Panel Bedroom has two fine portraits of a Venetian Lady and of a lady in a large ruff. The White Panel Room has some Watteau tapestry and good Georgian doors. The Dome Room, so called because of a canopy over the bed, also has good doors, with a portière about a hundred years old of satin embroidered with flowers in silk. In the White Dressing-Room, which contains more portraits, is a good early eighteenth century fireplace of marble and wood carved with lions' heads. The naval prints that line the adjoining corridor are of great value and interest. Hard by is a fine Georgian staircase. Other rooms are the Star Room, the Half-Moon Room and The Monks' Landing, where is a Jacobean panelled door and a staircase with good balusters. Here hangs an old painting of Samson and Delilah.

The beautiful wrought-iron gates and stone piers in the courtyard outside are from Bell Street, Reigate. Much might be written of the beauty of the grounds. Some 76 acres are laid out in terraced lawns, flower-beds and shrubberies, with very venerable trees; and a peculiarly beautiful feature is the "Monks' Walk."

One should not omit to record that James II, when Duke of York, resided for some time at Reigate Priory; that Foxe, the martyrologist, was tutor here to one of the Norfolk family; and that Archbishop Usher, whom Evelyn visited here, died in this house in 1656.

PHILIP M. JOHNSTON.



Copyright.

THE DETAIL OF THE HALL FIREPLACE.

"C.L."



Copyright.

IN THE WHITE DRESSING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE ADVANCE INTO MOAB

THE operations in Palestine which have hitherto been confined to the country between the Mediterranean and the Ghor or depression in which lie the Dead Sea and the lower part of the Jordan Valley are now being extended to the east of this river. At present the movement of troops is in the land of Moab, into which an advance was made from Jericho. When the writer crossed the river in the month of April it had lately been in flood, and overflowed into the fringe of oleander and willow which skirt its banks and lie within its higher limits, and the undergrowth was full of timber and debris washed down. The stream was running strong, and the only means of crossing being by a single ferry boat, the transfer of mules, horses and baggage to the other bank took some time. The Turkish Government had built several successive bridges which had been washed away at the floodtime, but the officials found that such structures were more profitable than permanent ones, as a large baksheesh was obtained each time a new bridge was erected. At El Ghoraniyeh, where the road eastwards crosses the river, the Germans have, however, recently built a concrete bridge. On the night of March 4th the Turkish encampments at Nimrin, to the east of the Jordan, having been successfully bombed, they subsequently retreated, and on the night of March 6th blew up their bridge. The river is usually about 90ft. wide, and, though rapid, would not offer any great obstacle to modern military engineers. An advance was soon made on the road to Es Salt, which is the chief town on the east of the Jordan and the administrative centre of the district, with a population of about 11,000, largely composed of Christians.

The road to Es Salt crosses the plain of Shittim, about five miles wide, and then following the Wady Nimrin turns northwards up the Wady Sharib, leaving the direct route to Arak El Emir and Amman on the right. From the plain there is a steep ascent, the country being lonely and uncultivated, but clothed at this time of the year with beautiful wild flowers.

The Moab mountains somewhat resemble some of our down country, barren and covered with little grass. They rise to a height of 3,000ft. or more above sea level. The plateau, which is undulating and becomes more level as it approaches the Syrian desert, is about 4,300ft. above the Dead Sea. The country has few trees, but possesses many good springs of water which form various streams flowing down the steep Wady leading to the Jordan Valley. After the taking of Es Salt, Australian and New Zealand

mounted troops were sent to Amman in order to cut the railway which has been made in recent years along the Haj route from Damascus to Mecca. This has been the Turks' line of communication for their supplies from the north, and of great importance to them in their war against the Arabs further south. This line has at times been destroyed in different places by the Arabs and bombed by our aeroplanes, and it has now been cut at Amman, a bridge and culver being destroyed and the line dismantled for a considerable distance. Between Es Salt and Hesbon lies Arak El Emir (the Prince's Cliff), situated in the Wady Es Sir, a deep valley with running water and green turf, a contrast to the highland above. This is the ancient Tyrus where, as narrated by Josephus XII, Art. IV., lii, Hyrcanus, the grandson of Simon the Just Chief of the Sanhedrin, having quarrelled with his brothers, retired and built himself a castle and palace with gardens. Here in the rock cliff he cut caves several furlongs in length; there were banquet halls and living-rooms, and a stable cave is still to be seen with rock-hewn mangers for 100 horses. These were intended as retreats and fortifications against the Arabs, with whom Hyrcanus made war and treated cruelly. Fearing that he would be punished for his misdeeds, after seven years' rule he committed suicide; thus the buildings and caves he was constructing were never fully completed. A little to the south-east is Mount

Nebo, from which Moses viewed the Promised Land. This beautiful and extensive view embraces the Jordan Valley right up to Galilee, as well as the country beyond, and in clear weather Mount Hermon in the Lebanon has often been described. On a parallel ridge near by are extensive remains of the high places of Baal and the spot from which Balaam was bidden to pronounce a curse against the hosts of Israel encamped in the plain below (Numbers, XXII., 41 and following).

The road to Amman passes through Hesbon, the ancient capital of the Amorites. The ruins, which stand on the edge of the plateau on a low rounded hill, are extensive, and are of a large town of the Roman period, and show that it must then have been an important place. There are remains of a ruined fort and great quantities of hewn stones. This country east of the Jordan, the Moab tableland and the country beyond north and south, is the domain of nomad Arab tribes of Bedawen. Hesbon is the centre of the 'Adwan.

The writer had a meal in the sheikh's tent, placing himself under the protection of the tribe, as is customary when passing through and camping in their country



PRINCES OF THE 'ADWAN WITH THEIR ATTENDANT.



INTERIOR OF THE SHEIKH'S TENT.

and being accompanied by an escort of their horsemen. In their low brown camel-hair tents, relieved with white, these people live much as did the Hebrew patriarchs. The tent was 21ft. long and divided by a low curtain, one end serving for the women, who did not, however, hesitate to look over the top, and were very ugly, being disfigured with blue paint and tattoo. Butter was churned in a goatskin slung on supports, and they had the usual flat bread, the goat buttermilk, or cibou, being a favourite and refreshing drink. Coffee was made in the usual Arab manner, but was strongly flavoured with nutmeg. The men and boys were very handsome, and wore ornate arms. One little fellow only twelve years of age had two handsome silver-mounted pistols in his belt, which were flintlocks and he carried loaded. These children were grandsons of the celebrated Goblan mentioned by Conder and others. Further east are the Beni Sakhr, and there was long a blood feud between these two tribes which was started by Goblan. The latter saw a stranger riding a beautiful mare and, following behind, speared the unfortunate man, who turned out to be a sheikh of this other tribe.

These nomad Arabs, who are sworn enemies of the Turks and renowned horsemen, have already shown themselves useful in harassing them and cutting their line of communication.

H. K. HARRIS.

UNCLE IN LUCK

I.—1914.

Uncle : Well, Horace, my boy ! So you've thrown in your lot with the colours, eh ?

Nephew : Yes, uncle.

Uncle : And you join your regiment on Monday ?

Nephew : Yes, uncle.

Uncle : I suppose you'll be out in France, then, somewhere about the spring ?

Nephew : I expect so, uncle.

Uncle : Well done ! Bravo, my lad ! That's the spirit I admire ! That's the stuff the true Englishman is made of ! Ah, if only I were fifteen or twenty years younger !

Nephew : I expect you'd have been one of the first, uncle.

Uncle : You can take your oath to that, my boy. They wouldn't have held me back for very long ! When I think of those rascally Prussians—! Ugh ! If I could only get at 'em !

Nephew : I does seem a shame you can't, uncle.

Uncle : It is a shame ! That's the precise word ! I may be grey ; I may be a bit bald ; I may have put on flesh a bit. But what of that ? It's the spirit that matters ! My heart and lungs are sound. I see well. I hear well. I sleep well. I can walk my twelve and fourteen miles a day. Then why don't they take me ? Merely because I happen to be forty-four years of age ! Ah, well, my boy, I daresay forty-four seems pretty old to you, eh ?

Nephew : Oh, I don't know so much about that. I'm twenty-three myself.

Uncle : Hark at him ! Twenty-three ! What a grand age ! What luck to be twenty-three when this war has burst over Europe ! Not that I feel much more than twenty-three myself. If only I could convince those duffers at the War Office—!

Nephew : Have you tried, uncle ?

Uncle : Tried ? No. What would be the use ? They'd laugh me out of the place. I know 'em. If I were slim and had a good head of hair they wouldn't bother so much about the age. As it is— Ah, dear me ! The folly of these official people ! Many a hale man will be wasted because he happens to be over the regulation age.

Nephew : If the war lasts long enough, uncle, they may raise it. That would be splendid for you, wouldn't it ?

Uncle : Splendid ? I should just say it would ! But they'll never do that. It might get to forty, but never to forty-five or forty-six. No, my lad. I must be content to stay at home and get on with the ordinary jobs.

Nephew : Sounds a bit dull, uncle. I'm frightfully sorry for you.

Uncle : Never mind, my boy. Life is like that. I'm a philosopher. I shall manage to bear it somehow.

Nephew : I think you take it splendidly, uncle.

II.—1918.

Nephew : Hullo, old sport !

Uncle : Congratulations, my boy. Got your captaincy, I hear.

Nephew : Yes, I'm a third pipper at last. Took 'em long enough to make up their blooming minds. By the way, I suppose we shall see you in khaki before long ?

Uncle : Did you ever hear of anything so preposterous !

Nephew : Preposterous ? I thought you were eating your heart out to have a pop at the old Hun ?

Uncle : Me ? At my age ? D'you realise that I'm forty-eight, sir ? Look at my head ! Hardly a hair on it ! Look at my waist ! Fifty if it's an inch ! And then think of my business ! What's to become of my business ?

Nephew : Then you haven't found it so dull, after all ?

Uncle : Dull ? I don't understand you, Horace.

Nephew : As far as I remember, you were nearly in tears because you couldn't join up at the beginning of the war.

Uncle : The beginning of the war and now are two different things.

Nephew : You bet they are !

Uncle : I was—and am still—as patriotic as any man. But when it comes to asking me—Me, mind you !—with all my responsibilities—to put on khaki and sleep in a tent on some exposed cliff-top—

Nephew : You may not even have the tent. I've known the time when a tent would have been a luxury.

Uncle : Oh, well, I should never survive such exposure. My chest is extremely delicate as it is. I catch cold at once. And if I don't have my meals regularly I suffer terribly with my digestion.

Nephew : Digestion ? Regular meals ? You'll have to eat on the march !

Uncle : On the march ! Eat walking along ! At my age ! Certainly not ! I shall tell the authorities pretty plainly what I think of such treatment.

Nephew : Take my advice, uncle, and don't give any lip. You'll only be a Tommy, you know, until you get on a bit. Don't get across the sergeant-major, whatever happens. Keep your mouth shut and stick it.

Uncle : I will not keep my mouth shut ! I've not been accustomed to keeping my mouth shut, and I'm not in the least likely to begin now. When I think of the number of times I've taken the chair at board meetings and political meetings, and—

Nephew : That's all a thing of the past, old dear. The less side you shove on the better for you. After all, uncle, we've got to win the war, and we can't do it without men.

Uncle : I admit that—er—the war must be won. At all costs. Yes, I admit that. Still—

Nephew : That's the talk. At all costs. And I'll tell you what, uncle. If they invalid me out, as I expect they will, I'll run the business for you while you're doing your bit. . . . Don't groan, uncle. It's a grand stroke of luck for you that I happen to be free, isn't it ?

KEBLE HOWARD.

IN THE GARDEN

URGENT NEED OF MORE POTATOES.

EVERYTHING was apparently going well. Very encouraging reports were circulated of the progress of the ploughing programme and the season's planting. Equally encouraging were the optimistic reports of the progress made by allotment workers. The promise of this year's Potato crop seemed all that could be desired until a few days ago when we were distressed to learn from the Food Production Department that unless during the next two or three weeks something like half a million extra acres is put under Potatoes, the country will have to face a Potato famine. These are grave apprehensions indeed. The food question is in the balance; let us see in the few weeks that remain for planting that no stone—or clod—is left unturned to save the situation.

Where to Get Seed Potatoes.—It is felt that many growers have been discouraged by the delay in getting the seed tubers, chiefly due to the difficulties in transport. It is of little use writing to the overworked offices of the Food Production Department. From a glance through the advertising pages of the gardening journals it will be seen that many firms in England, Scotland and Ireland have seed Potatoes to offer. There is no shortage of seed tubers, but certain varieties, especially early and second early Scotch-grown, are difficult to obtain. King Edward, Scotch-grown, are apparently scarce, but there is no lack of once-grown and twice-grown seed. The position is serious, and the advice of the Food Production Department is, "Plan any sound variety you can get. You cannot get too many." The grower who says he must have Scottish or Irish seed of certain varieties may find that he is too late, and we are all urged not to be too particular as to varieties. We know what it is to experience a famine in Potatoes. A shortage this year must be prevented at any cost.

There is still time to plough, dig and plant. Last year excellent crops were raised on pasture land that was broken in late April. It is true that last year's crop was on the whole exceptional, from 15 per cent. to 20 per cent. above the average. We can hardly expect it to be so good again this year on the same acreage, and that is about the position. The Prime Minister recently made an appeal to farmers and others to grow a million acres of Potatoes in 1918. We understand that unless strenuous steps are immediately taken the Potato acreage will be under 800,000.

It is lamentable that even now the importance of the Potato crop is not recognised in some agricultural districts. Take, for instance, the County of Berkshire, in which the writer is specially interested. Last year this county produced 11,000 tons of Potatoes, but consumed 26,000 tons, leaving a deficit of 15,000 tons. This county should unquestionably be made at least self supporting, and an urgent appeal is now being made to all farmers, allotment holders, and even to those with small gardens, to plant more Potatoes.

It is felt that farmers have been discouraged by the delay of the Government to take up the surplus of the 1917 crop and instead of putting land under Potatoes have bought other seed. Lord Rhondda's belated announcement last week has done much to restore confidence just in time to save the situation. On May 15th the Ministry of Food will purchase all sound ware Potatoes in the United Kingdom which cannot otherwise find a market at not less than £7 a ton for 4 ton lots f.o.r.

Arrangements for the 1918 Crop.—The exact arrangements for the 1918 crop are not fully understood by the agricultural community and Potato growers in general. The Ministry of Food has already guaranteed to buy at minimum

prices of from £6 to £7 per ton all the crop grown on new land this year and to pay a generous price for the remainder of the 1918 Potato crop—prices for the latter being fixed by a Joint Commission of the Board of Agriculture and the Ministry of Food after visiting each area and taking evidence from the growers as to yields and cost of production. The Commission will assess the final purchase price of the crop for the district, but in any case this final purchase will not be less than an average (according to the time of delivery) of £5 15s. per ton for these Potatoes which naturally fetch the lowest price in the market. This bottom figure in the scale of purchase price has been fixed in relation to the average cost of production in the Fen Lands of Cambridgeshire, where Potatoes are usually produced most cheaply. It is obvious that as the minimum purchase price will be calculated on this basis the actual purchase price in a less favourable district will be proportionately advanced if it can be proved to the Commission that this maximum price will not secure an adequate return to the farmer. The whole purpose of the scheme is to provide something more flexible than the 1917 guarantees. The inevitable result of the flat price in 1917 was that every purchaser naturally wanted the best quality, and the cheaper qualities found great difficulty in securing a market. Under the 1918 arrangement people who want a better quality Potato will obviously have to pay a higher price for it, while those who produce the cheaper qualities will not be robbed of their natural market. It will be seen that Potato growing, apart from patriotism, promises to be a very sound business proposition. There is no fear of over production; on the other hand, unless we rise to the level of the occasion, we shall be very short of our requirements. All are urged to do their utmost in the national interest.

H. C.

LITERATURE

MR. ASQUITH AS A MAN OF LETTERS.

Occasional Addresses, 1893-1916, by the Right Hon. H. H. Asquith. (Macmillan.)

WHEN a politician makes an adventure into literature he challenges a new and more exacting test of his abilities. Success in party warfare depends chiefly on readiness to deal with the topic of the hour. His most effective speeches have a purely temporary effect. To crush an aggressive opponent, to extricate his followers from an embarrassing situation, to defend and attack, may win applause from the listeners and provide good reading next morning, but the interests dealt with are necessarily those of the moment only, and so the fame of the Parliamentarian, like that of the actor, lives only in memory. Nothing is quite so dead and stale as last year's—we almost said last week's—political discussion. Volumes of political addresses, even when by a Gladstone, Bright or Chamberlain, may be consulted as works of reference by the aspirant to political honours, but are inconceivably dull to the general public. But the topics of this book have engaged the thoughts of able men in all ages and invite very different comparisons.

All, or nearly all, the addresses in this book were delivered on important occasions. Two were rectorial addresses given respectively at Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities, four were in the nature of funeral orations at the deaths of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, King Edward VII, Alfred Lyttelton and Earl Kitchener, and the others given at such functions as a Prime Minister is expected to grace. The best in the volume is an essay on Biography read before the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution. It might be accurately described as literary gossip of the best kind. Nothing could be more suggestive in its way than the vital moments which he brings together from the lives of different men, great authors for example, when the *chef-d'œuvre* was finished. There are Grote, the historian, celebrating the completion of the twelfth volume by "sipping the delicious mixture (punch) with great satisfaction," Gibbon pacing the acacia walk chastened by a sober melancholy, Carlyle sitting down to his frugal Scotch supper with the feeling "I did not cry; I did not pray; but could have done both." He recalls the story of the death of Dr. Adam, Rector of Edinburgh High School, where Scott and Brougham and Jeffrey were scholars: "But it grows dark. Boys, you may go." What could be more touching?

Yet the poet and philosopher must search for some wider and deeper reason to account for the universal interest in biography. Under the term must be included not only the lives of actual men and women, but those that have been imagined and are on that very account truer to human nature.

The biographer often chronicles what he fails to understand and the creative artist sets down only what he knows to be true and the interest in biography is widespread because it is interest in life itself. Until ended, the journey we all have to make is in part shrouded in mystery. Once and once only do we pass that way. It is no wonder that we have an unbounded curiosity about those who have traversed it before us. Had they advantages, or were they handicapped at the outset? Was the journey dull and monotonous or alive with adventure? What of the pitfalls, what of the glory? How did the traveller comport himself under the varied fortunes of the road? It is not a single incident that will satisfy a greedy curiosity, but particulars of every form and kind. Boswell, the prince of biographers, did it for Johnson, and Sir Joshua's famous picture is an epitome of his tale; Benvenuto Cellini, Rousseau and a few others have done it each for himself. But their number is few. The official or family "Life and Letters" is the bane of truthful biography. A draped figure, a muted tongue, a concealment of faults and offences, a glossing over of follies and vices, the cowardly fear of exhibiting a human being as he was have made in Great Britain what should be the most fascinating branch of English literature the most repellent.

In "The English Bar" Mr. Asquith does not face the music. His defence of the "gentlemen of the long robe" from what he calls "the cheap sarcasms of superficial and uninformed politicians" takes no account of the real criticism. Let us state it without irony or ill humour. A lawyer's life, according to the words of the Attorney-General, endorsed by Mr. Asquith, "is spent in constant and unceasing conflict. We breathe every day an atmosphere of eager, strenuous, unsparing controversy." In other words, a lawyer espouses the cause of his client. His business is not like that of the scientific investigator to lay bare the truth, but to advocate the construction of evidence which tells in favour of his client, to persuade a jury and win the sympathies of a judge over as far as he can and use the fetching argument. Here and there a mind may survive, so robustly constituted that even a long course of this kind of deception will not ruin it or England would not be proud of her judges; but on the many there can be but one effect, the sapping of frankness and scrupulous honesty. The lawyer politician is too apt to consider less what are his inmost convictions than what it is expedient to say. He is too clever, he follows instead of leading. Like the journalist, he looks on politics as part of his professional career. The elector infinitely prefers a plain, blunt fellow if he possesses the sovereign gifts of honesty and conviction. Unless Mr. Asquith is prepared to argue that a man's profession does not in any way affect his character, one cannot understand how he can answer this criticism, which is in many mouths to-day.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE PERCHERON HORSE IN ENGLAND.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As the Hon. Secretary of the recently formed British Percheron Horse Society I continue to receive many enquiries as to whether Percheron horses can be acquired from France. Obviously there is remarkably keen interest in the breed and the influential step which has been taken towards establishing it on a firm basis in this country. Perhaps, therefore, you will be good enough to allow me a little space in which I may be permitted to explain the situation. There are in England at the present time about seventy stallions and mares which have been imported directly from the Perche District of France during the last fifteen months, and which will form the nucleus of the first British Stud Book. The first comers numbered fourteen—two stallions and twelve mares—and they arrived early in 1917, having been specially selected and purchased in the late autumn of 1916 at the time of the annual visit to Mortagne of the French Stud Purchase Commission. Special permission had to be forthcoming from the French Government before their export was sanctioned. In years to come those pioneer importations to this country will, I believe, become historical, and it is worth mentioning now, therefore, that the purchasers were the Earl of Lonsdale and Mr. Henry Overman, the latter a well known farmer and horse-breeder of Norfolk. Towards the end of 1917 further sanction from the French Government enabled a number of gentlemen (and one or two lady admirers of the breed) to purchase forty-one high-class mares, chiefly young ones and most of them in foal, and thirteen stallions. These have now been distributed for some time, and not the least satisfactory feature of their coming is the satisfaction they have given, without exception, to their new owners. One naturally associates this fact with the multiplicity of requests which are coming in now, not only from those who already own Percherons, but from those who are anxious to do so. British owners of the horses should be given full credit for having acted from patriotic motives from the time it was made known that the Percheron-bred horse had done so magnificently in horsing the guns and transport in France. What the war has revealed, so far as the horse supply in this country is concerned, is the poverty of the right stamp of gun horse—the strong, short-legged, active gunner of hardy constitution, with tractability and power. The Percheron-bred horses in their tens of thousands from the United States and Canada pointed out the moral that adorned the tale. To judge from my correspondence, however, there is a growing interest in this country in the possibilities of the heavy draught Percherons for agriculture. This demand may, of course, be contributed to by the existing dearth of heavy draught horses, a want which is due to so much more land having been placed under cultivation as well as to demands for the Army. May I, therefore, point out that so far as I am aware at present no more are to be obtained from France. Seventeen mares are due to arrive from that country this week, but they are all that could be acquired from two hundred stallions and forty mares permitted by the French Government to be exported to America. The seventeen were bespoke long ago, and it is, indeed, to be regretted that five hundred or more could not be brought over. They would speedily find eager buyers. The French, however, are as keen to maintain the breed and its notably high standard as they are proud of it, and we must therefore wait until the fall of the year in the hope that some of their best will be liberated. For it should be understood that those associated with the British Percheron Society do not wish to import other than the highest and best examples of the breed. By the autumn, too, we may pray that the existing grave crisis in France will have passed away, never again darkly to overshadow thoughts of all else, when also their Government will desire to do what they would gladly do now, did circumstances permit, towards assisting British admirers of their horses to establish them on a flourishing and permanent basis. In time to come also American true-bred representatives of the breed must come into calculations, but that also must be a matter for calmer and more normal times.—A. SIDNEY GALTREY.

HOMING PIGEONS.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Referring to "Trenton's" notes on heredity in homing pigeons, I should be much obliged if you would inform me whether there is such a thing as a Homing Pigeon Stud Book, or if tabulated records of the breeding of the winners of the more important, viz., the long distance, pigeon races are procurable. Any information as to works on the breeding and training of these birds would be welcome. Can "Trenton" tell us if any pronounced development in the "homing" instinct—if instinct it be—has been brought about by breeding; and is the "homing" of these birds dependent upon sight, or is it the result of a highly developed sense of direction? This I ask because, although I have no experience whatever of the breeding or management of the birds, I have at times been present when a lot of them have been liberated, and I have noticed that, whereas some of them circle round, apparently looking for some object to guide them on the first stage of their journey, others start straight off without a moment's hesitation, seeming to know exactly the line they should take. According to "Trenton," some of the birds used for military purposes persist in their homeward flight through the closest barrage, undeterred by shot and shell. It would be of interest to know how they fly under such circumstances. Do they get above the "storm" or do they sink below it? What, too, is the quality which impels them to overcome what one would think would be a natural instinct to seek for safety? Is this quality derived from certain strains of blood; is it hereditary courage or is it common to the breed? I may mention that I have met homing pigeons, evidently out for business, flying very low in stormy weather—so low that they scarcely topped some sheep hurdles in their line of flight. I am afraid to trouble you too much, but I should like to know if the "homing" instinct is common to pigeons in general, but more fully developed in what is called the "carrier" pigeon. Another point on which I should like information is the effect of a long flight on the bird. Does it lose weight, and does it

require time to recover? Let me add that it is no mere curiosity which leads me to trespass on your space, for having read "Trenton's" account of the services rendered by these birds in the war, I am much inclined to set up as a breeder.—H.

AN OWL AS A PET.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I read with great interest one or two articles that you published some little time ago referring to owls. I have one I caught as a full-grown youngster that was flying along the front here and keep as a pet. It was easily tamed, and would in a few days feed from the hand and let me stroke it. I am told these birds have ears of different sizes, and are thus quickly enabled to locate any sound. This one has an amusing habit of turning its head completely upside down if it sees something that takes its interest but it cannot understand. It usually greets me with the owl's whoo-oo, but to my surprise it varies this by mewing like the cat, and actually barked exactly like the dog (a terrier) did at times. I never knew they were mimics before. This is of the smaller horned, brown variety. If I lived in the country, I would give it its liberty, but I do not think it would go far away, and if fed occasionally would probably come to call, unless its natural food was abundantly and easily obtained.—R. P., Brighton.

ELECAMPANE.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The late Rev. W. W. Skeat in his "Etymological Dictionary" describes elecampane as a plant; and Dr. Brewer, in his "Dictionary of Phrase and Fable," describes it not only as a plant, but also as a sweetmeat (coarse sugar candy). A plant might well live in a lane and candy is sold in a lollipop shop. The joke consists in one word having two such very different meanings.—J. D. W.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I copy a verse by Rudyard Kipling in "Rewards and Fairies," which seems to show that Elecampane means something which is not exactly a "sweetmeat":

"Excellent herbs had our fathers of old—
Excellent herbs to ease their pain—
Alexanders and Marigold,
Eyebright, Orris and Elecampane,
Basil, Rocket, Valerian, Rue
(Almost singing themselves they run)
Vervain, Dittany, Call-me-to-you—
Cowslip, Melilot, Rose of the Sun.
Anything green that grew out of the mould
Was an excellent herb to our fathers of old."

—A. K.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have read the discussion in COUNTRY LIFE referring to the word "elecampane," and venture to send the enclosed extract from my dictionary: "Elecampane, a composite plant allied to Aster, formerly much cultivated for its medicinal root. [Formed from Low Latin *campana*.]"—Chambers's Twentieth Century Dictionary, page 297. [Low L. late Latin ?].—M. C.

A WORD TO PLACE.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—So many of your readers, with regard to "elecampane," have proved themselves interested in out of the way words that I am hopeful that they may be able to shed some light upon one which I heard a week or so ago in a little mining town in Shropshire. It was used as a threat to an obstinate pony, "Go on or I'll *tansel* you!" What does "tansel" mean, and is it a true word with a derivation and history of its own or a meaningless combination of "tan" (as in "tan your hide") with something else?—M. D.

FROM NEW ZEALAND.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A lovely thing happened up at Palmerston North the other day. It is half way between Wanganui and Wellington, and each day trains leave there at the same time for the two places. The two trains stand end to end at the platform, the whistle blows, and they move off in opposite directions. On this occasion a Maori standing on the station just before they departed coupled the two together, that is, the two rear carriages. The whistle blew and the two trains started, or tried to start. Picture the trains blowing off steam, puffing and having an unpremeditated tug of war, while a big, fat Maori is dancing up and down on the platform waving his arms and shouting out "I back-a the Wanganui train, I give two to one on the Wanganui train." Could it have happened anywhere else or have been done except by a Maori in a sportive mood? It only cost him a fine of £5, and was worth it easily.—A. A. M.

CONY AND WATER.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—On reading "A.H.'s" letter on this subject in your issue of the 16th inst., my friend J. T. D., who is with me as I write, reminds me that one evening in 1897, when we were fishing in the lower part of the Lune, a broad and swift river, we observed a hare quietly lollop down the bank and breast a strong stream to the other side and lollop off.—CECIL E. MAPLES.

THE OLDEST PLASTERED HOUSE IN ENGLAND.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—This is, I believe, the oldest plastered house in England, having been built about 1600 at Clare, in Suffolk. It will be seen from the photograph that it has well withstood the ravages of time.—J. W. OVEREND.

ILLEGAL DESTRUCTION OF RARE BIRDS.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—To shoot a "protected" wild bird is to injure not an individual, but the inhabitants of a single district, but the community at large. Everybody is the poorer by the recent shooting of no less than four separate bitterns, as recorded by local papers, three of them in Hampshire, a county where the interesting and rare, so-called, "common bittern" (*Botaurus stellaris*) is completely protected by law all the year round. Are the long efforts of our County Councils and of the R.S.P.B. to preserve our rare birds (now hard hit through many causes) to be frustrated by traitors in our midst or marauders from a distance? Mr. W. H. Hudson, in his "British Birds," says of the bittern: "It comes back to us annually as if ever seeking to recover its lost footing in our island; and that it would breed again in suitable places as in former times is not to be doubted if only the human inhabitants would allow it." We might then be able to say that once more in England "The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest." The penalty for "killing, taking or possessing" a protected bird is £1, and the Act of 1902 says the Court "may order the bird to be forfeited and disposed of as the Court shall think fit." One of the Hampshire culprits, a farmer, was traced by the police and prosecuted; but the magistrates did not enforce the forfeiture clause, merely imposing the ridiculous fine of *half-a-crown*, i.e., he paid, say, 2½ per cent. on the value of the stuffed specimen which he was *allowed to keep*. If a sportsman sees a "queer" bird he may be sure it is a rare one. Magistrates ought not to allow the plea of "shot it without knowing what it was." It is to be hoped that landowners and shooting tenants will set their faces against the vandalism and illegality of destroying rare birds.—F. E. MINNS.

FROM BURMA.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am enclosing herewith four photographs of the Sanaynan Pagoda in Burma showing the wood carving on the various towers. The wood is teak.—TOM GOULBURN (Captain, R.F.C.).



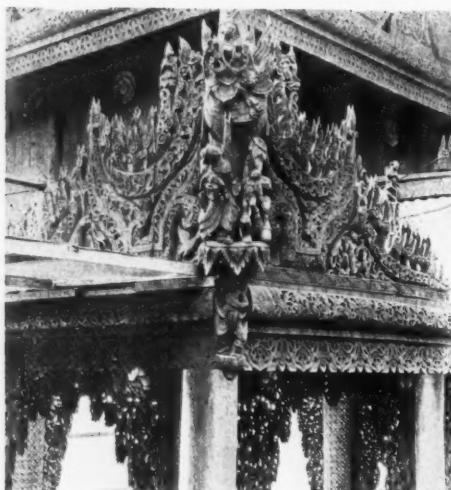
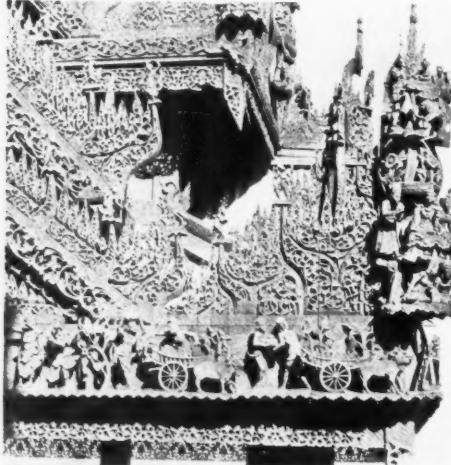
AN ENGLISH PLASTERED HOUSE OF 1600.

TREE BUTTS IN PLEASURE GROUNDS.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I should be much obliged if some of your readers could give me advice on this matter. There are lying tilted up on one side in a part of three pleasure grounds some immense butts of trees which fell in the great blizzard of 1916. The timber is in course of being removed and I should be glad to know how I can deal with these unsightly butts. There is a large amount of earth sticking to the roots and they are all lying facing south.—MAURICE GLYN.

[As the unsightly tree butts are in the pleasure grounds it would be a very simple matter to convert them into objects of beauty and interest by planting rambler roses, clematises or honeysuckles near by and allowing them to ramble at will over the offending tree stumps. The roots of the trees can, if necessary, be killed by boring holes half an inch in diameter well into the sapwood—that is the wood near to the bark—filling the holes with sulphuric acid or corrosive sublimate, afterwards plugging them with wood. Four such holes would be sufficient to kill the roots of each tree stump. A simple device has recently been invented by John H. Hemy of New Hampshire, Ohio, for burning out the stumps and roots of trees. It is referred to in a recent issue of *Popular Science Monthly*. The inventor has made ingenious use of air draught as an aid to combustion by constructing a conical chimney of sheet iron in sections which is so placed over the ignited stump that a strong draught is created. The air rushing in from below aids the process of combustion and keeps the fires burning briskly. After the lower part of the stump is consumed the upper part settles into the fire and furnishes fuel to burn out the big roots near the surface. The lower section of the cone with a diameter of about 30in. at the bottom—it could be larger if necessary—is made of heavier sheet iron, while the upper cone tapering to a diameter of 8in. may be made of ordinary stove pipe sheet iron. The whole chimney is about 6ft. tall, but may be made higher if stronger draught is desired. Not having tried this invention, we do not speak from experience, but it sounds very practical and well worth trying.—Ep.]



CARVINGS IN TEAK-WOOD FROM THE SANAYNAN PAGODA.

MULBERRY TREES.

[To the Editor.]

SIR,—It may interest your readers to know that the experiment tried by the Frenchman M. Migredicu was at a place called Wetherell Tower, on the Broadbury Moors, eleven miles from Okehampton. He got as far as to make a dress for his wife out of the silk of his own silkworms, and no doubt it would have been a flourishing concern by this time if it had been properly managed. He also tried growing mignonette, which failed too. My father bought the place in 1884, and there are several Ailanthuses there now, which have grown into fine trees. The large barn in which the business was to be carried on is there too.—ROSA M. GORLE.

FROM THE EDITOR'S BOOKSHELF

After Big Game: The Story of an African Holiday, by R. S. Meikle, F.Z.S., F.Z.S. (Scot.), and Mrs. M. E. Meikle. (T. Werner Laurie, 16s.) THE book is divided into four parts: 1, The Uganda Railway; 2, Hunting Experiences; 3, Special Subjects (Races and Customs—Pests, Insect and Otherwise—Prospects and Opinions); 4, Fishing in the Protectorate, by F. G. Afalo. Mrs. Meikle is responsible for the descriptive portions and for the account of the trip to the Laikipia Plains. She has written in a natural and easy manner an interesting narrative of what she saw, and makes some useful suggestions, such as the removal of the native quarter in Nairobi from the centre of the town. She stayed with the Governor, Sir Henry Belfield (this was in 1912), formerly Resident of the Federated Malay States, where Mr. Meikle had business interests, while the latter made his principal safari to the Guaso Nyiro. She and Miss Belfield afterwards joined him for a trip to Laikipia, which followed a short journey to Voi and Tsavo for Oryx callotis. Mrs. Meikle also devotes a chapter to Zanzibar, and to Dar-es-Salaam and Tanga, and makes the usual comments of an intelligent traveller on the German ideas of colonisation. Mr. Meikle's safari was run on generous lines, for in addition to a white hunter, Mr. Duirs, of whom he speaks very highly, he had a Scots keeper, the usual gun-bearers, etc., and about 250 porters. Many of the latter, of course, carried food for the rest. The author procured specimens of the greater majority of game animals with the exception of elephant. He was extraordinarily lucky with lions, and killed five with five shots from a "boma" in one evening. His notes on the habits, etc., of these animals are the best thing in the book. We do not remember having read before of their custom of burying the intestines of their kill. Both Mr. and Mrs. Meikle refer to various species of antelope as "deer," and a cheetah is incorrectly described as a "spotted cat." In reality it is more nearly related to the dog. Mr. Meikle says "the ordinary impala's horns run to about 15ins. or 16ins." Such a head for East Africa is very poor indeed. Another roins. would be nearer the mark. In addition to his luck with lions, the author killed a very fine buffalo with a spread of 50ins., which is very nearly the record, and a rhino with a good horn. We share his misgivings as to the future of that fine race the Masai, and as to trouble with the Indian trader, who is the cause of many grievances. Before his advent plague and typhoid were unknown in the Protectorate, and in addition he is responsible for the ravages of venereal disease among the Masai and Kikuyu. Mr. Meikle's hints to intending settlers are so valuable coming from a man of his experience that no one who contemplates going to the Protectorate to live should fail to read them. They are by far the most practical we have ever come across. Some of the illustrations are good, but we fear that in more than one case those of the game represent badly wounded animals. We hope we are wrong, for *After Big Game* revived many happy memories of forest and veldt, and we laid it aside with real regret.

A Book of Remarkable Criminals, by H. B. Irving. (Cassell, 7s. 6d. net.)

MR. H. B. IRVING'S excursions in criminology are already well known, and in the present volume he makes a selection of some half-dozen of the most notable English and foreign criminals. Charles Peace comes first, and the study of his life and the mentality it reflects leads Mr. Irving to the conclusion that had Peace flourished to-day his end might have been an honourable one in that he possessed qualities of absolute fearlessness, agility, resource, cunning and determination which are the very qualities that go to the making of the successful soldier. But that is merely a superficial estimate. Peace, judged by other standards, was a remarkable character, a man whose unquestioned gifts were, by such circumstances as the investigator cannot determine, directed into and squandered in a form of activity which brought him to the gallows. Mr. Irving marvels, as we all must, that a man believing so firmly in a personal God—and not only a personal God but a personal Devil—should so resolutely adhere to the course which he had set himself to follow. The opinion of Detective Parrock, who knew him, and who once came very near to capturing him, was that "he was a fair fighter, that he always gave fair warning to those on whom he fired, and that, being a dead shot, the many wide shots which he fired are to be reckoned proofs of this. Peace maintained to the last that he had never intended to kill Dyson. This statement ex-detective Parrock believed, and that the fatal shot was fired over Peace's shoulder as he was making off." There is no other story in the book so full of romance as that of Peace, although it is interesting to have an account of the Dunedin murders of Robert Butler, the curious story of Professor Webster, and the strange partnership in crime which existed between the Widow Gras and Gaudry and the many other grim narratives. Exactly of what utility such studies may be for the ordinary reader it is difficult to say. Perhaps it is to the student of psychology that the appeal is most generally made. However this may be, such collections never lack readers.

My Adventures as a German Secret Service Agent, by Captain Horst von der Goltz. (Cassell, 6s.)

CAPTAIN HORST VON DER GOLTZ was the same Bridgeman Taylor who, in the first months of the war, was tried in England for espionage; the extent to which he was implicated in the designs of the notorious von Papen has already been set out in a Government White Paper, and so far as his Secret Service exploits are concerned, that business is the *terminus ad quem* of his story. In coming to a book professing to be a candid account of the writer's share in the sort of work which falls to one engaged in secret "diplomacy" the reader is naturally a little dubious in accepting as candid fact the medley of intrigue and adventure which it contains. Captain von der Goltz began his career at an early age owing to his having come into possession accidentally of a letter addressed to a member of the Hohenzollern family, which apparently was of the highest political importance. From this chance happening followed

a series of adventures in which he passed, at one time, as a Russian Prince in the bosom of the real Prince's family, as an officer in the Mexican Army, and eventually as *aidé* to the German Military Attaché at Washington, Captain von Papen. How he comes to be writing this book, and, chiefly, how it is he is prepared to risk the consequences of such an indiscretion in the light of what he tells us of the fates that have overtaken quite innocent associates of his own is not at all clear. All that matters to the reader is that the volume is vastly entertaining, and if it is all fact, then once again the old adage about the relative strangeness of fact and fiction is demonstrated.

The Serbian Front in Macedonia, by E. P. Stebbing. (John Lane, 6s., net.)

JOINING as a transport officer to a unit of the Scottish Women's Hospitals going out to Salonika, the author relates his adventures, and gives an interesting account of the doings of the Serbian Army, their hardships, bravery, and individual nobleness of character and kindheartedness throughout the advance which ended in the retaking of Monastir. The early chapters deal with the troubles and delays in starting from England, and the still more irksome waste of time through misunderstandings with regard to disembarkation and its attendant details, with the worries of conveying the impedimenta, conspicuous among which is a huge washing machine. He pays a well deserved compliment to our merchant skippers who, he says, play so large a part in helping the Empire to win the war. Without them, as he affirms, we should crumble up in a few weeks. The landing at Salonika, a description of the place with the various types of men of many nations assembled there form a picture which dwells in the memory. The battles, with a final assault on the Monastir lines, are graphically described in this book which is well worth reading.

The Pretty Lady, by Arnold Bennett. (Cassell, 6s.)

MR. BENNETT'S new novel, unlike his former books, is a satire on London. London in war-time is put under the microscope and we are invited to take note of the futility of the activities of the fashionable people who run war committees, organise *matinées* and generally manage to get a good deal of satisfaction out of England at war. Christine is a "pretty lady" who plies her trade in the promenade of a Leicester Square music-hall until "C. J.," Mr. Bennett's leading man—we cannot call him hero—"puts her among her own furniture" as the technical phrase apparently has it. "C. J." is a bearded bachelor of fifty who lives in the Albany and whose commonplace goings and comings are the theme of the book. It is a depressing picture of selfish people doing the "right thing" without ideals or imagination. Only Christine is human and lovable, and it is her too generous heart, combined with a queer religiosity, that is her undoing. As a story the book, brilliant as it is in its observation and its uncanny skill of sketching the essential characteristics of a scene or a conversation, is too much a sectional and bloodless survey to carry the sympathies of the reader with it. It thus fails to make vice attractive; just leaves it as something belonging to the routine of the big world.

The Sheep Path, by Harry Tighe. (Westall and Co., 6s.)

"THE SHEEP PATH" was love, marriage, motherhood as they affect the life of the ordinary women of the lower middle classes. Arethusa Blake was not quite an ordinary woman, she had seen the long martyrdom of her mother's life and, feeling convinced that marriage with an ordinary man of her own class had nothing better to offer her, refused the dictates of her heart and the love of a certain Ernold Fraser, a clerk in the solicitor's office where she was a typist. She married a successful man because of his income, and in the course of time saw the folly of her ways and longed for the "sheep path," believing, in common with many another man and woman, that in her own case the "sheep path" would be the way of happiness. The number of debatable points that Arethusa, in her intellectual, as opposed to her enlightened days, succeeds in raising will ensure that "The Sheep Path" finds a public among those young people who are asking whether home life is worth its sacrifices. In spite of a good deal of cleverness, the author's mannerisms are irritating, and there is an inherent, if naïve, vulgarity in much of his work which will make it wearying and, when not merely funny, a little nauseating to many readers.

Simple Souls, by John Hastings Turner. (Cassell, 6s.)

"SIMPLE SOULS" is one of those elect books which seem to have been written in the inspiration of a happy moment and, once dashed off, its author appears to have abandoned all responsibility towards it, so that improvements which second thoughts might have dictated remain unmade; but its spontaneity and freshness more than weigh down the balance in its favour. The "Simple Souls" were Molly Shine, a shop-girl, and the Duke of Wynnningham who met in the snake house at the Zoo, where the Duke had mislaid his hat. The Duke, as the outcome of the interview, made Molly an allowance with which to buy "silly books," and upon which her mundane family naturally put quite another construction. The Duke to relieve Molly of these embarrassments goes through a form of marriage with her and sends her back to Bermondsey with an even larger allowance, believing that he has made her happy. He has merely, however, taught Molly to love him and fired her with the determination to be loved herself. The Duke's sister, "Lady Blake"—surely a somewhat strange title in the circumstances—naturally objects to the new Duchess and conducts a strenuous campaign against her to the reader's infinite benefit; but Molly, less by cleverness than sincerity, wins the day, and our last glimpse of Lady Blake shows her leaving "cards and capitulation" at Wynnningham House. Molly's vulgarisms are neither those of her class nor of her character, and the accident on the island is a haphazard affair which no experienced novel reader will approve—unless by then he is so gratefully disposed towards Mr. Turner on other counts that he is ready to admire him in everything.

RACING & BREEDING NOTES

ACTING on the principle, I presume, that there is nothing like carrying the war into the enemy's country, a correspondent writes a rather strongly worded letter, in the course of which he says: "Do you think it can be right to go on racing while the war is raging, and of what possible use can it be?" As to the question of right or wrong, I can only say that it is purely a matter of ethics, which each of us must decide for himself. I might perhaps add that there appears to be a strong majority of opinion in favour of "carrying on," no matter how furiously the foe may rage. It is certainly so with the men who are doing the fighting, and who shall deny that they, above all others, are entitled to consideration? For myself I think that with certain limitations it is not only right to assist in maintaining the continuity of racing, but that for more than one reason it is advisable, even necessary, to do so. That, however, is a matter of opinion. The "utility" of racing is, I think, another matter, for racing is the mainspring of the whole light horse breeding industry of the country. Let me restate the case as briefly as possible. Horses are necessary. Without frequent recourse to thoroughbred sires it is not possible to breed light horses of good quality; without racing it is impossible to test the soundness, courage and constitution of the sires we use. As a matter of fact, the thoroughbred horse—the useful thoroughbred—is the result of a process of testing and selection carried on without interruption for more than two hundred years, and that process must continue year in year out, or the breed will commence to degenerate. Other considerations—there are many—apart, racing is therefore not merely useful, but necessary as being the only practical means for providing the sires necessary for the continued production of horses suitable for general purposes—for military service in particular. But say some people—a recent correspondent in the *Times* among them—there is no need whatever for racing: a few wealthy owners could easily keep the breed going till the end of the war. For reasons obvious to anyone conversant with the subject that is not a practical suggestion. If carried out it would for one thing so reduce the number of thoroughbred horses from among which to select sires that this selection process would be to all intents and purposes valueless. Even as it is, owing to the operation of the quite necessary restrictions under which racing has been carried on of late, the supply of proved and tested horses from among which we have to provide sires necessary not only for the production of thoroughbred horses themselves, but of general utility stock as such, is running very short. Here are a few figures in illustration of my meaning. In the three years before the war the number of horses in training per year was on an average of 3,969—the average for the last three years works out at about 2,470—but this is a misleading average, for the total number of horses in training is rapidly diminishing. This last year it did not reach 1,900 horses of all ages. It is, however, with the falling off in the number of the younger horses, those from whom we have to select our coming sires that we are the more immediately concerned and that the figures are anything but reassuring. In 1914 we began the season with 1,438 two year olds; owing to the stress and strain of racing and other circumstances, only 358 of these two year olds remained in training as four year olds. In 1915 we started with 1,097 two year olds, of whom but 269 remained in service as four year olds. At this rate—the number of two year olds in 1916 was 878—his year will find us with about 200 four year olds. Taking the average proportion of colts to fillies, about one half of these will be fillies. On this basis we shall this year have about 100 four year colts in training—less than a fifth of the number available in normal times—and it is from among these colts that a generation of sires must come—sires for the getting of both thoroughbred and general utility stock. Of even the limited number available, it must further be taken into consideration that many will be unsuitable for use as sires and that a certain proportion come under the head of geldings. To my mind the conclusion is clear also—can it be denied?—that, too, from a national point of view, the general horse breeding industry of the country must be maintained; that without an ample supply of proved and tested thoroughbred sires it is impossible to breed general utility stock of useful quality. Then racing, as being the only practical means whereby the qualification of these sires can be ascertained, is necessary in the interests of the nation, and I have endeavoured to make it clear that from

the same point of view—the national point of view—no further restrictions are advisable. I am not able at present to give the number of two year olds upon which we can reckon this year, but we start with 467 three year olds, 269 four year olds and 360 classed as "five year olds and upwards." TRENTON.

MULES IN WAR

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]
SIR,—Mr. Sidney Galtrey's mule article in COUNTRY LIFE prompts me to send the following lines:

I am only a common or garden mule
Who was bred in the U.S.A.
I was born in a barn on a Western farm
Many thousands of miles away
From where I am munching a Government lunch
At Great Britain's expense to-day.

With dozens of others I knew, and have seen,
In my Little Grey Home in the West,
Where the grazing was succulent, luscious and green,
And Life was a bit of a jest,
I have sniffed the salt breeze blowing over the seas
And I've landed in France with the rest.

The journey was horrid—a horrible dream
Was the loading—its shindy and row
And the people expecting a moke to be keen
To swarm up a frightening "brow"
And slither down ramps that were greasy and damp
To a standing unfit for a cow.

They packed us like herrings 'way down in the hold,
With never a thought nor a care
For animals worthy more Government gold
Than all of the rest who were there;
And the best spot, of course, was reserved for the horse,
Who had to have plenty of air.

Well, we jibbed and we strafed and we kicked the Light Draught
And I planted my heels in the hide
Of a man on the ship who was flicking a whip
And whose manners I could not abide;
But I've travelled so often since then in the trucks
I have learnt how to swallow my pride,
And I go where I'm put without lifting a foot
For a rag song and dance on the side.

Many months at a time I was up on the Somme
In the rain and the mud and the mire:
We were "packing" the shells to the various Hells
In the dips of the vast undulations and dells
Where the field guns were belching their fire.

It was very poor sport when the forage ran short
First to eight and then six pounds a day,
But we managed to live on the blankets they brought,
Though blankets I now think, and always have thought,
Are but poor substitution for hay.

I remember a week when we played hide and seek
With the shrapnel the Boches sent over:
I remember the night when they pitied my plight,
And pipped me, and put me clean out of the fight
With a "Blighty"—then I was in clover.

For they dressed me and sent me quick out of the line
To a hospital down at the Base,
Where the standings were good and the weather was fine
And the rations were not a disgrace:
There, just within sound of the Heavies I found
La France can be quite a good place.

And now I've recovered—I'm weary and thin
And I'm out of condition and stale,
My ribs and my hips are too big for my skin
And I've left all the hair of my tail
On the middlemost bar of the paddock I'm in,
For they turned me out loose, as I'm frail.

Now the life in a paddock according to men
Is a sort of a beautiful song
Where animals wander around and can squander
The time as they wander along,
With nothing to worry them, nothing to do
Except for food intervals daily; but you
Can take it from me they are wrong,
For paddocks are places conducive to thoughts
That settle unkind on the brain,
And often I find them to follow a kind
Of a minor-key tune or refrain
As I doze for an hour in the afternoon sun
Or I stand with my rump to the rain
I dream of the barn on my Illinois farm
And I long to be back there again.

—L. L. L., Base Indian Remount Depôt, B.E.F., France.